THE CROSBY VOICE

ISSUE No 29
SEPTEMBER 1984

HAIL K.M.H!

Starts inside

NEWSLETTER OF THE VICTORIAN BING CROSBY SOCIETY
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Hello again,

And have we got a lot of exciting news for you in this issue! But before I get onto this, may I remind members who have not yet renewed their membership to DO SO NOW! In previous years it has been our practice to give late-payers three chances. However, with ever-rising costs and the fact that yours truly has more and more demands being made on his spare time these days (and consequently less and less time to spend on tasks like chasing up subs), this is the last notification that Australian members will get. Overseas members, this is only your first reminder, however, the same rules will apply to you next issue!

Anyway, enough nagging! As I said, this edition is full of good news for the collector.

For a start, we have the first of a series of five promised articles from American Crosby buff Vern Taylor on Bing's Kraft Music Hall Radio series. Entitled "Hail KMH', these articles are the result of long hours of labour on Vern's part, including a number of interviews with the show's original writer and the man who made Bing Crosby "Bing Crosby" - Carroll Carroll. Part 1 "THE CREATIVE ARTISTS", begins on page 5.

Secondly, we are proud to announce the publication of the most comprehensive listing ever of Bing's Kraft broadcasts. The work of many people, in particular US collector Howard Levine, its publication may never have come about were it not for the efforts again of...Vern Taylor. See page 16 for details of how you can

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The Victorian Bing Crosby Society, PO Box 422, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. 3205

Executive Committee: President: Bob Machliss, Vice-President: Ken Orren, Treasurer: Keith Dorman, Secretary: Les Saynor.

General Committee: Bill Bennett, Josie Conway, Sylvia Harding, Jim McManus, George Styles.

USA Rep: Richard Pearson, PO Box 1481, Arlington, Virginia 22210.

purchase a copy through this society. The initial print run is limited to 100 numbered copies.

Our third piece of exciting news concerns the projected issue, on LP, of all of Bing's commercial issues, every take, in chronological order, starting with "I've Got the Girl". And the first two records are out now! Read all about it on page 17.

Of course, there's a lot more than that in this 52 page issue of The Crosby Voice.

We have a mid-1960's magazine article on Bing and his (then) young family. This features some very attractive photographs which we thought you'd like to see. Thanks to Bob Schrader for this one. Turn to page 32 for the start.

We've had to change our record ordering service for members. On page 21 you can find out why and how the system will now work.

US Member Judge Francis X Smith, a keen Crosby man from way back, was recently honoured as "Judge of the Year" in New York. We thought you'd like to read about it, and you can, on page 22.

Another member, Clem Parkinson, is a bit of a song writer. You can see one of Clem's efforts (which mentions Bing) which was published in a U.K. song book. See pages 23 and 24.

Our centre pages feature a thoughtful and well-written essay which appeared in TIME magazine early last year on how popular songs remain a part of our consciousness all our lives.

On page 37 is a review of a new book on Fred Astaire. Naturally, Crosby is mentioned quite often.

Frank Murphy of Photoclub fame has come up with an attractive idea for making your Crosby cassettes a real showpiece. Turn to page 45 and you'll see what we mean.

You'll notice a slight impmovement in our presentation in this issue too, mostly in the form of larger easier-to-read page headings, but also in the featuring of photographs to break up long pages of type. We'll be developing this more in the issues to come.

We note with sadness the passing of well-known Adelaide collector Doug Black recently. Although yours truly did not know Mr Black personally, his name was very well known to me. Our sincere condolences go to his family and friends.

As usual, we kick off the magazine with "Future Functions".

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FUTURE FUNCTIONS

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MONDAY OCTOBER 22ND - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING + MOVIES

Well here we are on the home stretch for another year! It's time for our Annual General Meeting again (not to mention our annual elections). As always, we promise to keep the formalities down to a minimum and the entertainment up to a maximum. And once the essentials are out of the way we'll be screening Bing's 1938 feature

PARIS HONEYMOON

which will be the first go round for this one. If time permits, we'll also show a few shorts featuring various artists.

Venue, for the second-last time, will be the theatrette of the Mobil Building, 2 City Road, South Melbourne. Starting time for the AGM is 7.30 sharp, but if you're a regular, you'll know to arrive around 7.00, as parking is a real problem these days and also because there are always stacks of records from the Bentleigh Sewing and Record Centre for sale, plus raffle tickets, etc to buy.

Please note the new entry fees (to cover the hall rental of $175.00) of $3 - members, $6 - member families, $1 - pensioners and students and $5 - non-members.

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MONDAY DECEMBER 3RD - MOVIE EVENING

Our final meeting for the year (and our final meeting at Mobil) will be a double-feature night. In response to a number of requests, we're screening a Fred Astaire Movie, and it's one long-missing from our TV screens. Naturally, there'll be a Crosby movie as well, and this one is also making it's debut with the Society.

The Astaire movie will be THE BROADWAY MELODY OF 1940 in which the magnificent 'Begin the Beguine' dance sequence is worth the price of admission alone.

The Crosby movie will be DIXIE from 1943, Bing's first (not counting King of Jazz) colour feature.

All other details for the meeting remain as for our October 22nd meeting above.

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PAST FUNCTIONS

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JUNE 18TH - FILM EVENING - THE MACK SENNETT SHORTS

Despite the fact that it was a cold, wet Wintry Melbourne evening, some seventy brave souls fronted up on June 18th for a night of Bing on video. In addition to the six classic 1931 Sennetts, they saw highlights from "King of Jazz", "Who Killed Cock Robin", "Legend of Sleepy Hollow" and a clip from Bing's last Christmas special in which Stanley Baxter did a brilliant impersonation of the young Bob Hope.

Door prizes of Crosby books and records were won by Paul Mason, Ray Newson, Lyndon Ware, Bill Bennett and Adrian Fowler.

We had an interstate visitor (or should I say visitors) on the night too - Stephen Lambrides and his wife, from Queensland. Stephen tells us that they are getting a society going up in the sunshine state, so if you have a friend or relative up there who you think might be interested in joining a Crosby society, why not get them to drop Stephen a line.

His address is: 58 Guthrie St, Paddington, Queensland 4670.

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AUGUST 13TH - FILM EVENING - JOLSON/CROSBY NIGHT

For the second time in twelve months, we joined forces with the International Al Jolson Society for a double feature evening.

The Jolson feature was BIG BOY from 1930 while the Crosby feature was BIG BROADCAST from 1932.

It was a BIG BIG night!

Seriously though, over a 100 members and visitors turned up to a night of good entertainment. We even had a couple of visitors from the U.K. - Tom and Rita Crockett, who although not members, certainly appeared to be enjoying themselves.

Door prizes were taken home by Rita Crockett (imagine travelling thousands of kilometres to win a Crosby LP!), Les Saynor, Joe Stevens, Herb Bennett and Len Giddins.

HAIL KMH!

by Vernon Wesley Taylor

IN THE WORLD OF THE BING CROSBY MUSIC COLLECTOR, A RESURGANCE IN HIS RADIO PROGRAMME SERIES, THE KRAFT MUSIC HALL APPEARS TO BE TAKING PLACE.

TWENTY YEARS AND MORE AGO WHEN EDWARD RICE WAS BUSILY PURSUING EVERY LEAD HE COULD FIND, ONLY THE MORE FANATIC COLLECTOR HAD MORE THAN AN ORDINARY INTEREST IN THE OLD SHOW. NOWADAYS HUNDREDS ARE INVOLVED.

DURING THIS PAST YEAR NO LESS THAN TEN NEW LP RECORDS HAVE BEEN RELEASED, IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD, AND MORE ARE FOLLOWING. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE SEARCH FOR KMH IS SECOND ONLY TO THE SEARCH FOR BING'S IRREGULAR SONGS, MOST OF US HAVING AMASSED HIS MORE CONVENTIONAL OUTPUT ON MODERN LONG PLAY RECORDS OR TAPES.

NBC

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BING CROSBY AND THE KRAFT MUSIC HALL
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PART 1 - THE CREATIVE ARTISTS

Nothing quite like the Kraft Music Hall actually existed before Bing Crosby became its host and star, not even the show itself while it was still emanating from the East Coast and starring Paul Whiteman. It was almost as if it had suddenly appeared on the radio landscape. It was fresh, fast and startlingly uncluttered with the somewhat stale presentations common with the other 'variety type' broadcasts. More importantly for the Crosby fan, Bing himself had changed!

John Reber, the guiding genius of the series was the first man in radio to insist on on employing 'names', believing the audience would have greater interest. Movie stars big and little, stage eminences great and small, musicians long-hair and short; politicians, statesmen, tragedians, comedians, war-heroes...all were offered guest spots. Bing sang with most of them, joked with all of them, grew touchingly serious with some of them.

Bing's solos were given a luster with better-than-average music, the dialogue - even the commercials - were bright and crisp. Best of all, everything was done with a more open style, a tone of believable warmth.

In retrospect, it is easier to see what only a few caught at the time. Bing opened out like a rose, blooming in a way he had not done before. KMH became the wider source from which he flowed out onto the world.

His earlier radio work, even his records and films seem rather preliminarial today, despite his having been a professional for nearly ten years and in films for five. Before KMH, his acting looks muffled and, though his previous music-work has a superb beauty and quality all its own, his non-singing was closer to the stereotypical 1930's Hollywood Leading Man. He was stiffer, more formal, almost cautious (if that word can be used to describe Bing). After he entered the Music Hall, he became very quickly, the singer-actor we have all come to value; a friend that never bores, one we cannot forget.

If he changed for the better during his captaincy of KMH he was not alone, for right along with him, his crew changed also. The two possible exceptions to this were the writer and the music director,

because it was they who bought about the change. Yet even with them, it would not be surprising to learn they enjoyed some metamorphosis themselves. The climate in even the smallest world affects everybody within it.

The influences which brought this about are neither mysterious nor complex. Radio writing and music was maturing but in particular Kraft had the services of one of the best, most innovative of them all to do their writing. John U. Reber was vice-president in charge of radio for the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency and the man credited with having invented the idea of the Kraft Music Hall. He assigned Carroll Carroll the writer for the show. In those far off days the advertisers were much more intimately involved with production than they are now. Reber's new program was to be a top-budget broadcast because the sponsor was willing to support a first-rate show. It would beam across the U.S. from New York and star the great Paul Whiteman and his orchestra and only famous personalities would be used as guests, the initial outing featuring Al Jolson. Carroll wrote every word, including the commercials for the two-hour show.

Mr Carroll had earned his new assignment by his extraordinary abilities, not merely in comedy writing (in which he was very good indeed) but in applying the tactics of a psychologist to his craft. He made a habit of carefully observing the performers for whom he wrote material, scrutinizing not only their gestures and body-language but paying close attention to the things they talked about and the way they used words doing it. The result was always a more accurate and convincing performance. When Bing was hired to head up KMH from Hollywood a few years later, it was no accident that Carroll moved west.

December 5, 1935 was Crosby's first broadcast for Kraft. This airing was unique for this was Whiteman's final show and the two of them would each star in separate halves of the two hour slot, with Bing ending the programme in Hollywood, thus letting the public know in a dramatic way that Crosby was now the KMH star. His first words - thanking and praising Whiteman - were Carroll Carroll words. He would continue to use such words until he too left Kraft.

Carroll Carroll

Bing with John Reber

Crosby was still in his early thirties but already a very famous film, records and radio star. How could the new comedy writer in his life dare to tamper with such success? How could Bing tolerate such tampering? Carroll had already 'tampered' with the likes of, besides Whiteman and Jolson, such luminaries as Georgie Jessell, Burns and Allen, Eddie Cantor, Jack Pearl, Rudy Vallee and many others, all of whom profited well from the experience...in varying degrees, depending upon their abilities to absorb strong hints.

If you dig out Bing's earlier efforts and compare them to his work on KMH you might agree. During that first broadcast he was already beginning to change before our ears and our eyes, for if you watch his performance in the picture he was finishing about this time, the first 'Anything Goes' and compare it with 'Rhythm on the Range', you will begin to discover a more assured, laid-back Crosby. The Western was begun some months after the Hall began. His speech is more natural, his movements more convincing. Nothing spectacular, you might say, but it was a change that ripened until Bing Crosby became entirely himself. He lacked only time and practice. Mostly, he was going to get this during his KMH decade. In a little season Bing came into sharp focus.

Bing was a classic dictionary definition of the aptitudinal person: "Readiness in Learning. The potential capacity for learning a certain performance" (Webster's New International Dictionary, Unabridged Edition). He often admitted he took advicefrom others. This is not an insignificant talent by any means. It was on the Kraft show that he took some of the best advice ever offered him. Carroll had fashioned out of existing but largely unusued materials in the singer's character a public image that will stand against the sky forever.

The writer, so good at his game, even collaborated with the musical director, John Scott Trotter, in composing an occasional gag-song usually for the comedy element. One they did together outlasted everybody on the show. On May 26th, 1938, Ken Carpenter, the show's resident announcer sang a number "Hail KMH" that ended with the network's famous standby chimes at the halfway point. Bing also took a cut at it. It became a standard bridge from then on, even continuing as the musical tag (without the words of course) when Al Jolson, in an irony of radio-casting, replaced Bing in 1946. (The lyrics to "Hail KMH" appear elsewhere in this edition of The Crosby Voice.)

John Scott Trotter took over from Jimmy Dorsey after the first 18 months because Dorsey wanted to cash in on the swing craze then becoming important across the country, and felt that he could not manage to continue with KMH. Mr Trotter was introduced to the listeners by Bing on the final season-airing in the spring of 1937, then he joined Bob Burns, the programme's comedian, for the summer replacement and began with Bing the following September.

He was musicologist and arranger while still in college. He worked with Hal Kemp and many members of the orchestra, and when they all graduated, simply went to work as professionals. John Scott Trotter was surely the pre-eminent student of music in Bing's lige and, like Carroll, came along at a good time for him. Trotter was not one to press his advice readily but what he had to say in music and the way he said it was apparently listen to most carefully by his new boss. He settled easily in as the next arranger, musical director and orchestra leader and, unlike the show's writer, very occasionally getting on the front of the show. Such functionaries were rarely heard over the air.

"Bing always picked the songs he was going to sing", John Scott Trotter told an interviewer, "that was his contractual right and nobody ever argued with him about it". At the close of each broadcast, "Bing would go into the (control) booth and select his numbers for the following week. He would write them down on the left-hand page in what we called the little black book. Then, Virginia Miles, the secretary, would type them up on the right-hand page." After that it was up to Trotter to work out the musical arrangements, which he would do, always keeping Bing's musical likes and dislikes in mind. Frequently he would refer to his reference recordings, brief transcriptions of those parts of each broadcast containing the music portions. If a popular rendition of a song was circulating, he would give it a listen. John Scott was one of the best adaptor-arrangers in the business in the 1930's and 1940's and could re-score a familiar piece of music with a new concept or approach that provided it with new interest. It was this talent as much as anything else that earned him his marks with Bing. He was without temprament whatsoever; affable and easy-going. The model

for the 'jolly fat man'. Hoever, where his sphere of authority lay, he concentrated all his serious attitude.

Bing remembered one time his appreciation of the bigger man's points of view in other ways. "John Scott Trotter" had great dignity and taste - great taste," he said, "great discipline with his orchestra. They all knew what he meant when he told them. They did just what he always said." He went on, "He was a tremendous man, you know, 330 lbs. He always dressed impeccibly, with white piping on the vest, the Homburg hat, always his clothes were beautifully tailored. He really looked great in them. But he knew what he was doing every minute."

These three then, Bing, Carroll and Trotter were the people who built each broadcast; the creative artists. There were others who, if they did none of the writing and arranging, nevertheless contributed much to the show's success.

From his earliest days with Whiteman, Bing always made sure he had a guitarist around somewhere. The soft and mellow tones of this ancient instrument brought out the soft and mellow tones of the Crosby voice, sometimes even helping it along a trifle. While there were several guitarists behind his singing over the course of his productive years, only two predominated, Eddie Lang and Perry Botkin.

He enjoyed alluding to Botkin as 'Mr Bigbody' and Botkin, like Whiteman and Trotter was both a big and consummate musician. Had he desired it he could easily have become a renowned soloist, but fortunately for Bing he found working with the singer - as did so many others - more to his liking. He joined Bing after Lang died of complications following a tonsillectomy in 1933, taking Lang's position on Bing's last Brunswick recordings and going on to work with him in all phases of Crosby's career, including films.

He, Trotter and Carroll recalled some of the Kraft days several years after the series ended. John Scott was asked how the show was put together every week. "Not without difficulties," he said, "but it was never what you would call a hard job or anything like that." Would he care to describe some of it? "Well, it would start right out after the show was over. Bing was most efficient and business-like at these times. First, he would go in and select his songs. Then Carroll would begin telephoning the next morning...on Friday. He would call Bing and Carpenter and me and tell us about the guests for that week.

Then on Monday he would send to our homes (by messenger) his rough draft of his script. Bing would go over his copy very carefully adding or changing here or there, words or bits of his own sides (parts). This was generally to make his words flow easier, maybe it would be something like a name that he thought would fit better." Carroll told the writer in an interview during the summer of 1984, that Bing could even be unwittingly funny in this regard. More than once Bing would alter a word or phrase or a name, then just before going on air, change it back again.

On Tuesday Trotter would come to the studio to work out his arrangements with the musicians. Botkin: "We'd get together and have what we called a reading rehersal on Wednesdays, from one to three, per se. We would run through the things on Wednesday prior to Bing's coming in. Then, sometimes, we would go through a new song. We would go through it two, three times. Then we would have lunch. This was one of my favourite times." (Chuckles to himself) "There would be Benny from up at the Brown Derby. He would come down with the menu. Later he would bring the food into the conference room." It was then all of them worked out exactly how the broadcast was going to be done, point by point. The script contained many humourous touches, of course. "Mostly," said Trotter, "It was civilized repartee rather than merely doing gags thrown in one after the other as so many programs were doing."

Of course, Carroll Carroll would see to that. "Everybody enjoyed doing it," said Botkin, "delighted to be part of the whole thing. Everybody loved working with Bing. Really, the whole key to it was that everybody (in the show) was playing with (and to) Bing Crosby." "We always relaxed around Bing," said Trotter.

"From 1937 on, we always worked out of Studio B of NBC at the corner of Sunset and Vine," Botkin recalled. "Every show, Studio B was Bing's studio, It was a regular auditorium, 400 or 500 seats. Bing worked out in the centre, in front of the band. Then the show would go on out here at six o'clock and, I believed, at nine o'clock in New York, on Thursday nights." Audiences were a chancy thing, Perry Botkin opined because they didn't always respond as expected, sometimes laughing at the wrong places. On KMH they came and went through the years. "My memory of the very first part of 1937", he said, "and on for quite a time, we had no audience!" Eventually audiences, with a little guidance from a prompter, now standard proceedure, were invited

back, their presence adding an important dimension to broadcasting.

Of all the people Bing kept around him during his fifty-two year career, Ken Carpenter had the longest tenure as a performing associate. Carpenter was more than an announcer, despite that label which so identifies him. He played scores of roles on KMH and then went on to remain besides Bing through the rest of his radio days into 1962. His rich, authoritative voice, was a perfect counter to the sometimes farcical goings-on in the hallowed Hall. His good spirits and wry humour shone through his voice and added just the right fillip to the Crosby throwaway delivery. Bing told John Salisbury, "Ken had a good hold on what he was up to. A genuine professional radioman, he made me look good every time. He could do a lot of things with that big voice of his; he'd kinda surprise you. He could break you up, putting on some kind of character - a rube or something like that. Pretty good actor."

Ken remembered the nonchalence which imbued not only Bing but the whole show as well: "It was quite a departure from other programmes. An attempt was always made to break the guest artists down, that is to make them more human; talk to them in a new yet quite ordinary way. And they loved it, they enjoyed working with Bing. It seems trivial nowadays but at that time it was quite the thing to do."
Considering the type ofguest star they were capable of attracting to the show, and the fee that was paid them, this remark takes on a certain significance. Carroll told the writer that Kraft paid the lowest of all the programs to aquire their guests. However, they were accorded much courtesy, the script was always balanced in their favour - even against Bing if necessary and they were gifted with a beautiful teakwood tray containing each of the cheese company's products. All of them, through the years, came across better than their usual selves elsewhere; happier, funnier, more memorable. "We tried to make them more comfortable and they definitely were," said Ken.

The dialogue was defined by Carroll: It was "a poupourri of classic English, pop slang, musician-talk, foreign phrases, horse players lingo, baseball expressions, mad ad gab and all kinds of technical language - made up in such a way that it spelled out an unusual contiguity. The policy was to talk to highbrows as if they were athletes and athletes as if they were highbrows. We were very informal". Carroll, the appreciator of the risable remark beyond food and dreams, remembered, "the most sensational ad lib in the whole ten years was

after a great solo by the one-arm trumpet-player Wingy Mannone, Bing said - on the air , mind you - "Man, that was dirtier than a Russian horse-doctor's valise." Carroll protested loudly when this writer wondered whether it was really Bing's line and not his own. All of which goes to prove that Bing had learned well. His off-hand behaviour was never better. How did he get away with that one on the air? "What could they do?", Carroll asked, "make him take it back?"

"Let's see,"said Bing, "I guess I was on for Kraft about ten years, alright..,It was a pleasant career because Kraft never interfered in any way. They were marvellous to work for, very cooperative. They liked what we were doing and they let us know about it. They supported us in a very substantial fashion. A great outfit to be employed by."

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In subsequent issues of The Crosby Voice, we hope to discuss other aspects of Kraft Music Hall: The other performers and behind-the-scenes people: The girl singers, the comics, the guests. Perhaps something about the music and the musicians as well as the songs; perhaps what the sponsor thought about his landmark radio series. For the fun of it and to get a look at what the show's company worked with every week, a script of one of the hour programmes and one of the latter half-hour programmes. Finally, from several of those involved, details of how and why Bing went to another series; how the broadcast died.

What information do you have, reader, that can add to this endeavour to accumulate as complete a record as possible? All pieces, however small will have much value. Send in what you know, read somewhere, with the source. With everybody trying, we can write the history of "Bing Crosby and the Kraft Music Hall".

Vernon Wesley Taylor

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Well what a terrific first part to what will be a fascinating series. Vern Taylor is to be congratulated for his magnificent effort. If you'd like to drop him a line telling him just that, or if you have soemthing to contribute to a future article, Vern's address is: PO Box 475, University Station, Portland, Oregon 97207-0475, U.S.A.

ANNOUNCING THE KRAFT MUSIC HALL LISTINGS.

THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE, MOST AUTHORITATIVE LISTING OF BING'S SONGS FROM THE KRAFT MUSIC HALL RADIO BROADCASTS EVER ASSEMBLED. ON SALE NOW.

This list of the 385 Kraft Music Hall broadcasts between December 5, 1935 and May 9, 1946 is the labour of many hands over a span of many years. The greater part was taken from a recorded listing by Edward A Rice who obtained his information from John Scott Trotter, the musical director of the series, but the work may never have been accomplished had not Mr Howard Levine made up his mind to do it. His assiduous efforts, research and plain hard work are a debt to us all. This publication climaxes his valiant endeavor.

Special tribute should also be paid to Vern Taylor who was a prime mover in bringing this project into being.

Although this is by far the most detailed KMH listing ever compiled, some gaps do need filling in. Any contributions will be gratefully acknowledged in future editions.

One-hundred spiral bound copies of the first edition have been prepared and these will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis, one only to a customer.

The cost will be $Au10.00 plus postage - air mail Au$7.00 or surface mail Au$2.00. BANK DRAFTS or INTERNATIONAL MONEY ORDERS only will be accepted - no local currency!

U.S. members please note - you may order from Richard Pearson (address page 1)

All other members should write direct to our Victorian address. If you wish to reserve a copy to be collected at our October 22nd meeting, it is suggested that you write now.

ANNOUNCING "THE CHRONOLOGICAL BING CROSBY"

"The Chronological Bing Crosby" is without doubt the most ambitious Crosby record release project ever attempted! Not just all of Bing's commercial issues in chronological order on LP, but every single known take of every record!!!

If this all sounds a bit mind boggling, it is estimated that it will take from 30 to 35 lp's to cover from 1926 - 39 alone!

But what makes this project really exciting, is that it has already started. In fact, by the time you read this, the first two LP's covering from "I've Got the Girl" to "Ol' Man River" should be available for purchase.

A few other facts.

1000 copies of each LP are being produced. Cost is £5.75 each (this project comes from the U.K. obviously) but the records will be available in Australia from a still-to-be-appointed agent. If the name and address of this agent are known when we mail this newsletter, then details will be included on a separate slip.

Although the label is a new one (Jonzo), from all reports, quality will be excellent. Records used have been supplied by some of the best-known British collectors and mastered with the latest equipment and techniques.

Volume 3 is planned for later this year and Volume 4 early in 1985. Thereafter, discs will appear at 3 monthly intervals.

It should almost go without saying that the success of this project depends on your support. If sales are good, the project will keep on going. If sales are poor.....

UK members should write direct to the man behind this project for further information. (U.S. and European members, unless you hear otherwise, I suggest that you write there also.) His name is John McNicholas, and his address is 18 Greer Road, Harrow Weald, Middlesex HA3 6JF, England.

If you're ordering by mail, do write first enquiring about packing and postage costs. The price of £5.75 covers the record only.

THIS PROJECT WILL ENABLEYOU TO POSSESS MORE AND MORE RARE BING CROSBY RECORDS THAN VIRTUALLY ANY COLLECTOR IN THE WORLD BEFORE. DO SUPPORT IT!

NEW RECORD RELEASES

An interesting crop of new releases this issue - nothing of course to compare with 'The Chronological Bing Crosby' - but then again, what could?!

On the local scene, now that WEA records have taken over the rights to Bing's Decca records, they have released, or rather re-released, several of Bing's best-selling LP's. Nothing of real interest here ("Merry Christmas", "Two Favourite Stories" and of course the Irish LP's.) but it is nice to see some Crosby discs back in the racks.

A number of the LP's have new covers for the first time in 20 or more years which at least makes them look different. The only item of possibly vague interest to collectors is that "When Irish Eyes are Smiling" and "Shillelaghs and Shamrocks" have been combined as a C90 cassette for only a few dollars more than the single tape price. Of course, as both the aforementioned LP's include the record "When Irish Eyes are Smiling", you get that twice on the tape. But then, that's the obvious silly mistake you virtually expect from record companies these days!

Price of most LP's and tapes is $7.99, a reasonable cost.

Overseas there are a number of new releases, some of which we will be arranging to purchase for members. Details of how you can order records appears later.

From Blue Lantern records, we have two new interesting issues:

CROSBY & COMO - Broadway Intermission BR 123
This LP features the Crosby/Como content from two TV specials of February 29th and Marth 16th, 1960. Song titles are too many to list here but sound quality is adequate and the disc is recommended for your purchase. We'll be ordering copies, but if you want to write direct, the address is Blue Lantern Records, PO Box 244, Milford, Michigan 48042, USA.

THE MILLS BROTHERS - Early Transcripts and Rare Recordings
Also from Blue Lantern Records, this LP features a couple of 40's radio tracks and mostly early 30's discs. Bing is represented on Lazy River, Paper Doll and You Tell Me Your Dream, from radio and on disc by Dinah (Take B), Shine (Take A), My Honey's Lovin Arms (takes A & B), and also Side B of the George White's Scandals 78.

Other artists on the set are Al Jolson, Dick Powell, Duke Ellington, Cab Calloway and Louis Armstrong. Well worth having, I'd say.

BING CROSBY GOLDEN MEMORIES - CBS Record Club (Australia)

This 6-LP set features 60 tracks from Bing's Columbia Whiteman period through to Bing's last session for Columbia in 1934. Although there are no really 'rare' tracks on the set, if you missed out on early LP re-issues of the same material then there maybe something of interest here for you. The tracks seem to have been drawn from "The Bing Crosby Story Vol 1", "Bing Crosby in Hollywood" and "Harry Lillis Crosby" also there are sundry other tracks as well.

I believe that the price is quite reasonable. Write for details to: CBS RECORD & CASSETTE CLUB, GPO Box 4897, Sydney, NSW 2001, Australia.

FIVE LP'S FROM BLACK LION RECORDS

Each of these discs features two editions of Philco Radio Time.

BLM 52003 - 26/2/47 (Judy Garland) & 27/11/46 (The Andrews Sisters)
BLM 52013 - 23/10/46 (Spike Jones) & 4/12/46 (Jimmy Durante)
BLM 52023 - 5/3/47 (Al Jolson) & 2/4/47 (Al Jolson)
BLM 52033 - 26/3/47 (Jack Benny) & 1/10/47 (Gary Cooper)
BLM 52043 - 21/5/47 (Maurice Chevalier) & 26/11/47 (Frankie Lane)

Cost is reported at £4.50 each plus postage. Write to Phonoco, 16 Castelnau, London SW 13, England, for details.

Louis Armstrong & Bing Crosby - More Fun Sounds Rare SR 5010.

An LP containing some excellent radio-originated material featuring Bing & Louis: La Vie En Rose, Baby Won't you please come home, My Honey's lovin arms, You're just in love, Up the Lazy River, Sunnyside of the street, Done fishin', A song is born, I get ideas, Memphis blues, Kiss to build a dream on.

This record has been sighted at several Melbourne record stores. Try the Bentleigh Sewing and Record Centre, or Cunninghams.

DOROTHY KIRSTEN "ENCHANTED EVENINGS" - Glendale GL 9003

More extracts from radio broadcasts. Along with Bing, you'll hear Al Jolson and Frank Sinatra. No content details available.

PAUL WHITEMAN - JAZZ A LA KING - RCA PM 42413

This French import features 33 Whiteman tracks, and Bing can be heard of 8 of these, three of which (I'm Coming Virginia, Side by Side,

and Mississippi Mud) are alternate takes. Worth having if you like Whiteman, although the Crosby content will be superseded by the Crosby Chronology.

THREE SOUNDTRACK LP'S FROM CALIBAN RECORDS

Caliban 6039 - Too Much Harmony/Going Hollywood/Best Foot Forward
Caliban 6042 - Flirtation Walk/She Loves me not/Collegiate/Here is My
Caliban 6043 - Anything Goes/Every Night at 8 Heart.

These three discs feature the songs from the above-mentioned movies. Sound quality is reported be be fair only.

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RECORD ORDERING SERVICE - NEW FORMAT
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For the past year or so, we have been offering a record-ordering service for Australian members in which we place bulk orders with overseas suppliers for hard-to-obtain Crosby LP's.

Unfortunately, this service has not worked out as well as we would have hoped. It's not that members have not been responding - the response has in fact been excellent. There have, however, been other problems. For example:

. Delays in shipping from overseas caused by a) suppliers (some) being slow off the mark, b) strikes, c) customs, d) Records not being available.

. When records do arrive, they seem to arrive spread over several weeks, meaning that members have had to wait months for all their discs from different suppliers to arrive.

. Some members not responding quickly (or at all) to notification that their records have arrived, with the result that we get a build up of discs (and confusion) over who is due to receive what and how much they owe.

. A couple of instances of records sent out to members either not arriving or even arriving broken!

As may be determined from the above, offering an ordering service in the format existing, has just become too cumbersome, time-consuming and unsatisfactory. However, we don't want to give up

cont/...30

Above : **The envy of all Bing Crosby fans was this successful competitor in "Music Round Up" on Station 3XY Melbourne. Her prize took the form of a direct trans-Pacific call to Bing.**

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OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS: The Vintage Record Shop, 159 Ormond Rd, Elwood, for 78's and collector's LP's. Mon - Thur 5.30 - 7.30, Weekends 12 - 5. LP's at a discount from The Bentleigh Sewing & Record Centre, 348 Centre Rd, Bentleigh, and, Cunninghams, 80 Church St, Brighton. Bing tapes - Arnold Baker, 48 Groomsport Rd, Co Down, N Ireland BT20 5LP. Bing discography - John Joyce (Bookbinders), Saltmeadows Rd, Gatesgead, Tyne & Wear, NE8 AH3, UK.

URCHIN'S song

(Australia)

Some children were out in the schoolyard and skiting as kids of te

do. It seems that these lads were proud of their dads and bragged of th

things they could do. One little chap began to pout, Then

suddenly he blurted out my dad's a hel-tuva fighter He

sure packs a helluva punch He'll beat up 2 cops before breakfa

And five or six more after lunch. And when they drag him off to T

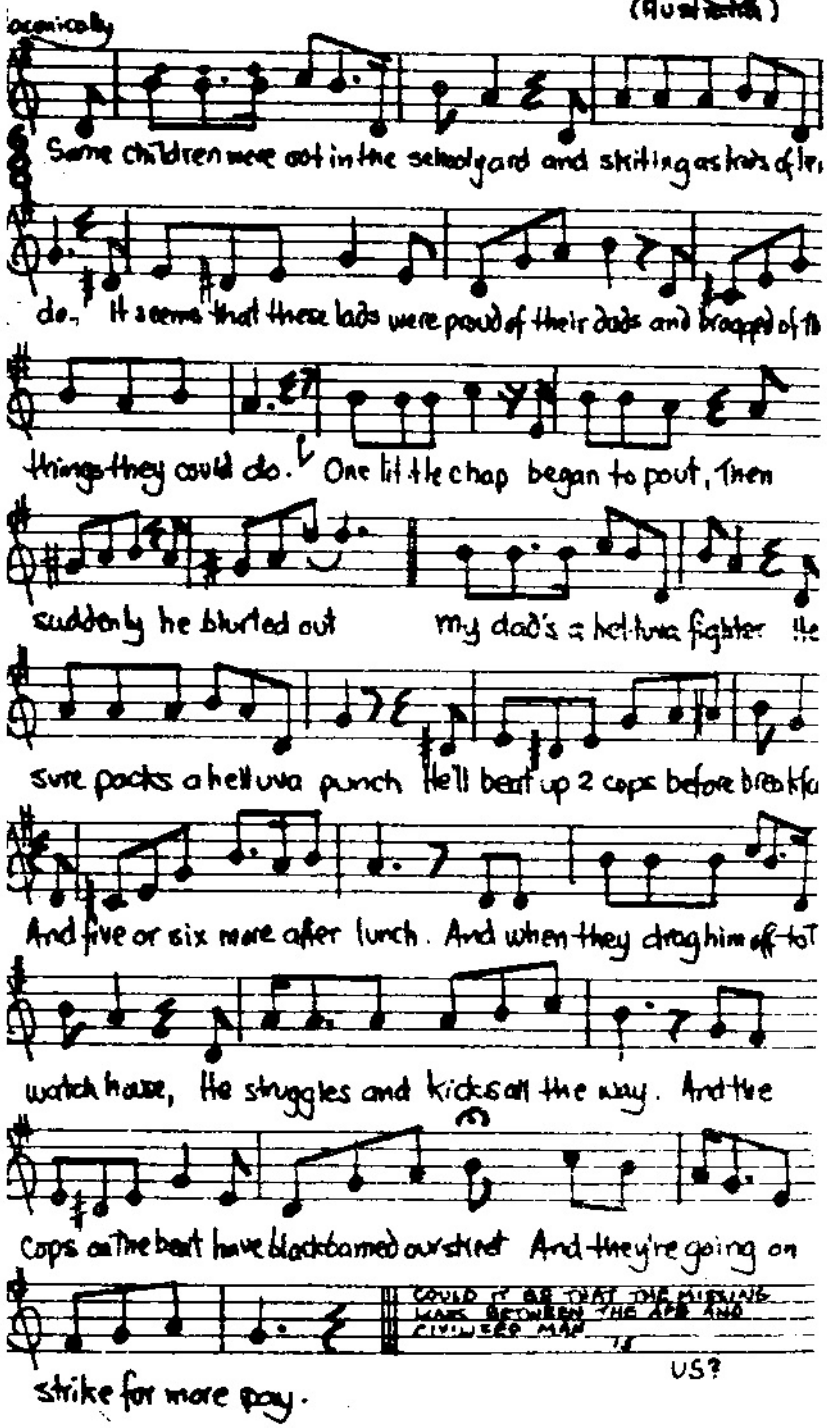
watch house, He struggles and kicks all the way. And the

Cops on the beat have blackbarred our street And they're going on

strike for more pay.

COULD IT BE THAT THE MISSING LINKS BETWEEN THE APE AND CIVILIZED MAN

US?



© words, music Clem Parkinson

Some children were out in the schoolyard,
And skiting, as kids often do.
It seems that these lads were proud of their dads
And bragged of the things they could do.
One little chap began to pout,
Then suddenly he blurted out:

My dad's a helluva fighter,
He sure packs a helluva punch,
He'll beat up two cops before breakfast
And five or six more after lunch.
And when they drag him off to the watch-house,
He struggles and kicks all the way,
And the cops on the beat have blackbanned our street
And they're going on strike for more pay.

Another kid, not to be outdone, said,
My dad is tougher than that.
If there's no-one around to pummel or pound
He'll go out and drop-kick the cat.
He loves to drink and swear and curse,
And when he's annoyed he's even worse:

My dad's a helluva fighter,
He's nasty, he's mean and he's tough.
He once used to spar with Joe Frazier,
But they sacked him for being too rough.
When he goes to The Champion or Rob Roy
For a skinful on Saturday night,
All the bartenders hide when he swaggers inside
And the bouncers all shiver with fright

But one kid was silent and thoughtful,
He didn't quite know what to do;
He wanted to brag, but here was the snag:
His dad was a mere five-foot-two;
His little face was flushed and red
He stammered as he softly said:

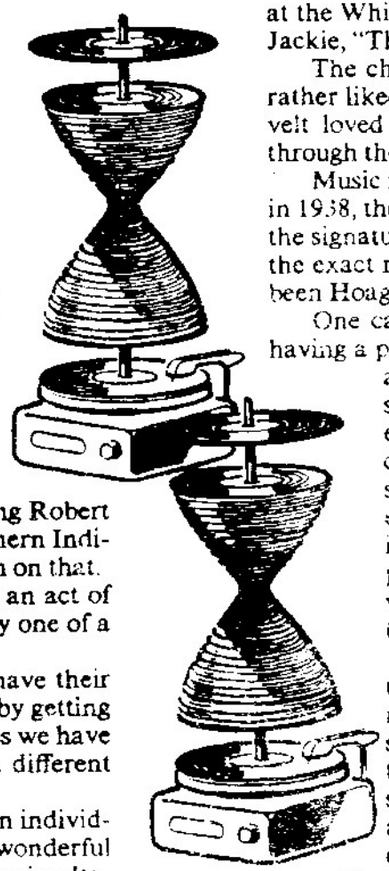
My dad's a helluva singer,
You should hear him run up the scale.
But his face always falls when the bloke next door bawls,
'Get off of the cat's bloody tail!'
He's a sort of a kind of bass tenor,
Mum reckons he sounds just like Bing.
And when my dad gets tight, he don't wanna fight,
He just loves to get up and sing.

They're Playing *Ur*-Song

The crowd at the Grammy Awards last week looked as if it had just flown in from one of the moons of Saturn: glittering, snorting the intergalactic dust. Touches of the high crass mingled with a sort of metaphysical flash. Stevie Wonder, for example, wore a cumulously quilted white satin tuxedo whose upswept lapels formed great angel wings. The costume had the curious effect of making him look like a Puritan headstone.

The American popular-music industry was having its annual pageant. The program was about to end. Joan Baez walked onstage unannounced. As if she were lost in time, Baez driftingly began to sing Bob Dylan's anthem. "How many roads must a man walk down,/ Before you call him a man . . ./ The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind,/ The answer is blowin' in the wind."

At that instant, a television audience of millions, including much of the baby boom that is now losing its hair, went time-traveling with Baez. Some felt 20 again. Some felt a thousand years old. They swooped back, daydreaming. Tears shot to their eyes. She was playing their song.



It is a fascinating, if familiar, process. When songs have that magic in them, they take on strange powers of recall. Commenting on a Noël Coward song, a character in Coward's *Private Lives* remarks: "Extraordinary how potent cheap music is." Songs eerily consolidate the memory, making obscure chemical connections in the brain. They conjure up moments out of time. They reconstitute things long gone, to the point that smells and images and a precise forgotten ache of the heart return hauntingly for a moment. The dramatization that occurs in the mind is intimate and utterly private. One has only to hear a snatch of Simon and Garfunkel's *Mrs. Robinson* ("Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio?/ A nation turns its lonely eyes to you,/ Woo woo woo") to be again in a rental car chasing Robert Kennedy's whistle-stop primary campaign across northern Indiana in May of 1968. And other memories cascade down on that.

The conjuring song, in turn, becomes a signature, an act of self-definition. ***Blowin' in the Wind***, of course, was only one of a thousand defining anthems of the '60s.

Traditionally, it is couples, not generations, that have their songs. Rick and Ilsa would put themselves in a trance by getting Sam to sing *As Time Goes By* in *Casablanca*. Sometimes we have more than one special song, or a different song for a different mate or a different archaeological layer of our lives.

Among the Tuvinian people of the Soviet Union, an individual can sing two melodies simultaneously. That has wonderful possibilities. Might one cross in the Tuvinian mind two simultaneous numbers, like, say, Bing Crosby's *Mississippi Mud* ("It's a treat to beat your feet . . .") with *Rock the Casbah* by the Clash? Would the Tuvinian stay sane if that happened?

A couple's "our song" presupposes an enduring and developing relationship of which the melody will be the theme. Every year on their anniversary, House Speaker Tip O'Neill sings *I'll Be with You in Apple Blossom Time* to his wife of 41 years, Mildred Anne. It is more difficult to develop a privately meaningful song if you plan to part company in the morning.

There may be an "our song" for a cause *(We Shall Overcome)*, for a college ("Bulldog, bulldog, bow wow wow, Eli Yale!"), for a specific event, like the release of the hostages *(Tie a Yellow Ribbon Round the Ole Oak Tree)*, and even for an era *(Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?)*. Nations have them. But *The Star-Spangled Banner* has never quite become "our song" in the way that the *Marseillaise* utterly and unquestionably belongs to the French. Politicians have their "our songs." John Kennedy may have thought of his Administration in terms of the words and music of *Camelot*. But it is said that once, during a reception at the White House, he heard *Hail to the Chief* and muttered to Jackie, "They're playing our song."

The choice may sometimes be perverse. Abraham Lincoln rather liked *Dixie*. Someone decided that poor Franklin Roosevelt loved *Home on the Range*, so he was condemned to sit through the tune scores of times.

Music is a form of spiritual carbon dating. If one came of age in 1938, then Artie Shaw's version of *Begin the Beguine* might be the signature he went by, the sound that would date his soul like the exact ring on a redwood. A few years earlier, it might have been Hoagy Carmichael doing *Stardust*.

One can never quite imagine people younger than oneself having a plausibly magical song of their own. It is a trick of age and generational perspective. Parents believe that the songs their children cherish, far from amassing rich emotional associations, are merely destroying brain cells. The workings of special songs are necessarily subjective, and they promote a kind of hubris. Still, even allowing for that effect, it is sometimes hard to imagine what private anthems will arise from, say, punk or new wave music. Are there couples now that will for years grow mistily tender when they hear a ditty by Meat Loaf?

But a romantic fallacy may be hidden in such prejudices. What the music stirs in the mind need not be mere sentimentality. The evocative magic worked by songs is essentially mysterious. It doubtless has something to do with the organization of the brain. The musical faculty resides chiefly in the right hemisphere, along with the emotions, the nonlogical, intuitive powers of the mind. Music cohabits in the brain with myth. Says Howard Gardner, a research psychologist at Harvard: "Music mirrors the structure and the range of our emotions. It has the same kind of flow as our emotional life." What is the sound of the right brain singing?

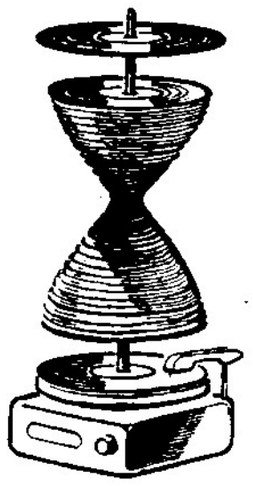
We organize time and myth with music; we mark our lives by it. The death by assassination of John Lennon was an event that mingled music and myth and completed the relationship between the two. Music, as the anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss once said, "unites the contrary attributes of being both intelligible and untranslatable."

Music is the way that our memories sing to us across time. The loveliest quality of music involves its modulation upon the theme of time. Songs, playing in the mind, become the subtlest shuttles across years.

But sometimes the music is a weapon, and sometimes it is a trap. For centuries, Celts have given themselves battlefield noise and nerve with bagpipes, making the "our song" of the regiment, the tribe, stirring up the blood. The pipes have their wild rhetoric. It may both stiffen and imprison the spirit. Sometimes people cannot escape from their songs. The Irish gift for the instant ballad that glorifies this afternoon's martyr will ruin a human heart and turn children into killers, the heroes of tomorrow's pub songs.

In the past, some scholars have pursued the idea that there is a universal "our song": the *Ur*-song that is said to run through the imagination of every child in the world, an eerie universal croon. Actually, it need not be eerie. For all we know, the *Ur*-song may turn out to sound like the opening bars of Perry Como doing *Hot Diggity*.

—By Lance Morrow



Wednesday, May 9, 1984
The Seattle Times

Tribute in Tacoma

Bing Crosby's fan club gathers to reminisce about The Groaner

RICK ANDERSON
Times staff columnist

The 6th Annual Tribute to Bing Crosby in Tacoma began promptly at 5:30 p.m. at the Nendels Motor Inn lounge in Fife. About 50 fans showed up to buy their own drinks and talk about Der Bingle at the Friday night welcoming party. The tribute continued for two more days, with several hundred Crosby followers passing through the 565 Club on Broadway in downtown Tacoma, watching re-runs of his old movies, listening to a high school choir sing his old songs, and buying up memorabilia that included a specially autographed photograph of Gerald Ford and two small oil-can coin banks signed by Arnie Palmer.

It may not be a tribute done up in the grand tradition of Hollywood. There were no limos, no spotlights, no big-name guest appearances. Tickets were $35 and included a few rounds of "Bing-o" games. But seven years after his death by heart attack while playing golf in Madrid, Bing Crosby was not forgotten in Tacoma, his place of birth. And that's all Ken Twiss had in mind.

"This was our most successful tribute yet," said Twiss, a 71-year-old retired chef and president of the Bing Crosby Historical Society, with almost 400 members in 12 countries. While the The Groaner's memory in Tacoma is preserved by a statue, a plaque and a variety of roses dubbed the Bing Crosby rose, it is Twiss and his low-budget society that try to make the memories flourish.

"He was once the world's greatest entertainer, that's all," said Twiss, who is not the slightest put off by the mass adoration paid elsewhere to a Presley, a Hendrix, or even a Belushi.

"Bing stood for something competely different, another time, movies that were decent, fun, and music that will last forever," he said. Nor did Crosby exactly die a tragic death, putting out on the 17th hole when he keeled over; then 74, Bing outlasted a lot of his fans as well. So it was a select group that came to honor Old Dad last weekend.

"Friday night," said Twiss, "I met a couple who came from England to the tribute. We have a number of members in England — Bing is bigger there than in Tacoma, even. He made his last records and gave his last concerts there. And they said they had met Bing once in London. It was a good memory they wanted to keep alive. So they came to remember, that's all."

Saturday, Twiss showed videos of Bing and served up a banquet of chicken cordon bleu and wine, and settled in with the others to listen to the Foss High School jazz band present an hour and a half Broadway review of Crosby tunes.

Sunday's program included more videos, a 16 mm version of Tacoma's Bing and Seattle's Frances Farmer in "Rhythm on the Range," a roast beef dinner, and a salute to Bing by the Wilson High swing choir, Dixieland and big-band music by Wally and his Melody Men and a performance by Stan & his Top Hat.

A silent auction was also held Saturday and Sunday to help raise money for the society, whose plans include attempting to purchase the house at 1112 N. J St. where Bing, son of a brewery bookkeeper, was born May 3, 1903. He was raised in Spokane.

The auction brought in about $400, although none of the items belonged to Bing. A book autographed by Richard Nixon went for $100, the Penzoil coin-banks autographed by Arnie sold for $20, a Bob Hope-autographed photo went for $25, and a Gerald Ford-presidential seal tie bar was bought for $95. Still, they were Bing's friends, and some added a personal touch: Ford also sent along a photograph of himself signed "To our friends at the Bing Crosby Historical Society." It was sold for $100.

Also, a new book on Crosby, "Bing, Just for the Record," was unveiled Friday night by its Irish author, Sheldon O'Connell, and a specially bound edition of it went for $40 at the auction.

"It was the book's premiere," Twiss said proudly. "And O'Connell appeared as our master of ceremonies. He's a very interesting person and was very well received."

Although Gary Crosby's book a year ago portrayed his father in his earlier days as a narrow-minded, sometimes abusive parent in contrast to his easy-going public persona, Crosby fans apparently prefer the more favorable image, such as that described by his widow, Kathryn, whom he married in 1957. As a favor to the historical society, she has autographed a copy of her recollections, "My Life with Bing," to Gov. John Spellman, who had proclaimed last weekend as Bing Crosby Days in Washington. Twiss will present the book to Spellman next week.

There is, however, an overlooked part of Crosby's life that Twiss would like to see recognized, he says.

"Bing entertained people for 50 years, all over the world, and he's still entertaining them today," Twiss explained.

"But a lot of people don't realize that the corporate Crosby also backed development of technological things, the audio tape, and improvement of the photo-finish camera at racetracks.

"Another thing, he did a lot for flash-frozen foods. You know, the method for preserving food? Crosby Enterprises did a lot in that area.

"Actually, we think Bing Crosby might be remembered longer for those kind of things than for his entertainment. Someone's even writing a book about that now."

FRANCIS X. SMITH—JUDGE OF THE YEAR

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 30, 1984

● Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this Thursday, May 31, the Criminal Court Bar Association of New York City will honor the esteemed jurist, Francis X. Smith, as "Judge of the Year," during the organization's annual dinner-dance at panoramic Terrace on the Park in Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, Queens County, N.Y.

This privileged award is but the latest of many honors that have been deservedly bestowed on Frank Smith in his 62 years.

Mr. Speaker, Judge Smith assumed the bench in 1971, when he was elected by the voters of Queens County as a justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York. After distinguishing himself in that position, Justice Smith was in 1977 appointed chief administrative judge of the Civil Court of New York City. Exceptional service advanced his career again in February 1982, when he was named to the position he still holds, administrative judge of the 11th Judicial District, Queens County, by the State's highest jurist, Lawrence H. Cook, the chief judge of the court of appeals.

Prior to his career on the bench, Judge Smith played an important and valuable role in New York City government. He was a city councilman from western Queens between 1966 and 1968, and served as president of the City Council of New York in 1969.

Mr. Speaker, Frank Smith's exemplary public service is matched only by his courageous efforts in defense of freedom during World War II. He served gallantly in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1944 to 1946, rising to the high rank of major before his discharge. His bravery was frequently rewarded during that service career—he received a Silver Star, three Purple Hearts, and a Presidential Citation.

Judge Smith first achieved fame when his exploits and those of the 29th Marines, 6th Marine Division, were featured on the front page of the New York Herald-Tribune and in the frontline dispatches of Homer Bigart, the Pulitzer-prize-winning war correspondent. Three thousand marines were killed or injured trying to take Sugarloaf Hill in Okinawa, but Frank Smith and his platoon took that land on May 18, 1945, in the 11th Allied assault.

It was in the Marine Corps, Mr. Speaker, that then-Lieutenant Frank Smith became friends with another brave serviceman, Bob Crosby, brother of the legendary crooner. Smith's injuries in Okinawa forced him out of action and into a California military hospital. But although away from the front, he was not forgotten by his service buddies. A call from brother Bob sent Bing Crosby to Frank's bedside, and thus began a friendship between the public servant and the entertainer that lasted more than 30 years.

Since that time, Mr. Speaker, Frank Smith has nurtured an appreciation of the unique voice, enormous talent and many works of Bing Crosby. In fact, Judge Smith possesses one of the largest collections anywhere of Bing Crosby recordings, photographs and memorabilia. Frank Smith has approached his fascination with Der Bingle the way he approached his love of the law: With boundless zest, wide-eyed rapture, and an unquenchable thirst to expand his knowledge. During a New York stop on a 1976 concert tour, Bing and Frank were inseparable. And when the city hall tree was lit that winter, Smith was again accompanied by Crosby, who thrilled the crowd with his incomparable rendition of "White Christmas."

Mr. Speaker, Frank Smith is a gifted jurist, a dedicated public servant, and a warm and compassionate human being, whom I am proud to count among my friends. I know that every Member of the Congress of the United States joins me in extending our sincere congratulations and best wishes to Judge Smith for a job well done and a life well lived, upon his selection as "Judge of the Year." ●

on offering some kind of service. Therefore, we have decided to change the system. As follows.

In future, all orders will be made to record producers on a direct-supply basis. In other words, any records you order will be sent to you direct from the manufacturer. Obviously, this will mean higher postage charges (a dollar or two per disc) but this will probably be cancelled out by the fact that small record orders usually come through customs without attracting duty and also that you won't have to pay our own internal postage charges, which, when you add the cost of packing, have been adding an extra two to three dollars to the cost of your orders!

When you think about it, you'll probably get your records quicker and cheaper, so what am I going into all this carry-on for!!!

RECORDS YOU CAN ORDER THIS ISSUE

1. CROSBY & COMO - BROADWAY INTERNATIONAL BR 123

2. THE MILLS BROTHERS - EARLY TRANSCRIPTS AND RARE RECORDINGS - BROADWAY INTERNATIONAL BR 118

These releases can be sent to you either by surface mail or air mail. The costs will be as follows:

SURFACE MAIL - One record Au$10.50 total
- Both records Au $20.00 total

AIR MAIL - One record Au$12.50 total
Both records Au$23.00 total

Please make all cheques payable to "The Victorian Bing Crosby Society".

CLOSING DATE FOR ORDERS WILL BE OCTOBER 31ST, 1984. ANY CHEQUES RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE WILL BE RETURNED.

If, in the past, you have ordered but not received any records (not including those on the order list supplied with the last magazine, please let us know.

U.S. MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE

For obvious reasons, there is no point in Richard Pearson supplying U.S. members with local issues. It's quicker and cheaper for you to write to the manufacturer direct! In the above case: Stan Hester, Blue Lantern Records, PO Box 244, Milford, Michigan 48042.

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BITS 'N' PIECES

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* Rumour has it that the BBC are producing a new documentary on Bing. Could this be a programme showing what the 'real' Crosby was like. Carroll Carroll has been among the people interviewed.

*.Whilst we're onto rumours, there's a whisper going around that a one hour recording has been found of the Gus Arnhiem Orchestra with Bing on two or three solo's AND that the recording may be out on LP in the near future.

* Sad to note the passing of Count Basie who joined forces with Bing in the early 70's to produce the LP 'Bing and Basie'; and also the passing of Fred Waring whose group accompanied Bing on a number of memorable recordings in the 1940's.

* The revival of the 1950's Alfred Hitchcock movies reveals that Bing actually 'appeared' in one of the best of the series - 'Rear Window'. In one scene, lasting several minutes, Bing can be very clearly heard singing 'To See You Is To Love You' on a radio. In fact, as there is very little dialogue over this scene, you could say that Bing is the central character!

* Do you want a stylus specifically designed to track your old 78's perfectly? Then Expert Pickups in England are the people to write to. They can supply every kind of diamond stylus available - from those required to play Edison Diamond Discs to extra-wide versions for early acoustics. I find that the best all-round stylus for pre-1950's Crosby 78's is one with a .0035 tip. It's especially good on discs like 'Shine' or 'Just a Wearying For You' as it sits in the groove and cuts out that annoying 'swishing' you get with a normal stylus. The address for details is: Expert Pickups - PO Box 3, Ashtead, Surrey, KT21 2QD, England. British members may like to ring direct: (03722) 76604.

* There's finally a 'legitimate' Crosby movie out on video. MGM have issued 'High Society' on tape and it's available through most cassette libraries. Considering the range of Bing videos for sale in the USA, it's surprising that more haven't appeared out here. 'That's Entertainment' is also out on tape, although that's hardly a Crosby movie.

MY SECOND FAMILY by BING CROSBY

MY SECOND FAMILY

'It's a delightful experience growing up with this second crop of Crosbys. They make me feel just a bit younger than I should'

Not many fathers have had the chance I've had —the chance to apply the lessons learned from raising one set of children to raising another. I can't think of anything more exciting.

This second crop of young Crosbys keeps me feeling just a bit younger than I should, but it's a thoroughly delightful experience. The youngsters have me playing baseball, handling guns and fishing rods and opening my eyes to wonders that I never saw before—or, maybe, that I've just lost touch with during the past 20 years. I'm having so much fun that I almost hate to see the children grow up.

Harry's already seven, Mary Frances is six and Nathaniel, four, is catching up fast.

The best thing about being a father again at my age—let's put that at about 60—is that he has more time to watch his children.

Naturally, I sometimes make comparisons with the way I raised my first family of four boys—Gary, Philip and Dennis, the twins, and Lindsay. When they were small I think I was too busy to take as much interest in their upbringing as I do in the raising of my new family. While they were growing up I was doing a weekly radio show and cutting a lot of records. I was making three or four films a year and we used to have so many guests for dinner that the boys had theirs earlier.

In those days I never got home until eight o'clock or after and the boys would be in bed by nine. I know my sons had a good mother and I think I was a good father. But I'm sure I'm a better father now because I have experience to go on. And now that the pace has slackened a little I have more time to spend with the children.

Now I have breakfast with the whole family every morning. And I have luncheon with Nathaniel, who comes home at noon when we're at Hillsborough, our home outside San Francisco. The other two children get home from school around three o'clock and the family has dinner together. I like it that way.

This new family of youngsters is a great deal like their mother Kathryn, tremendously interested in everything. But, of course, when children are into everything you have to watch them all the time.

Mary Frances, for instance, constantly gets into her mother's wardrobe. She's always trying on her dresses, hats, false eyelashes and chignons—whatever happens to be around. Harry is worse, and in a dangerous way. He has no fear at all. Cars, trains, heights, anything that seems risky attracts him. He's always wanting to light something—the fire, candles, my pipe. The other day he was playing with my guns and knives and I gave him a scolding. But he boasted about his daring. "I love dangerous things," he said. These children may be more imaginative than my older boys were and therefore more inclined to get into mischief.

I just can't punish them when they've done something out of sheer exuberance, or because they're lively and active. One time, when we were up at our ranch, I found Mary Frances sneaking out with most of our breakfast cereal to feed her pets—four little Welsh ponies. What do you do? A little girl, after all, is a new experience for me and I leave most of her discipline to her mother. I think punishment should be reserved for vicious deeds or for being rude or unkind; for a lack of regard of other children's playthings and belongings or for other children's feelings.

My first family was more obedient!

The thing that really gets the leather belt swishing is when reports come to us of misbehaviour in school or in church. Actually, the swish is more frightening than the blow because we always make sure to take the edge off the impact. Usually I have to apply the belt and if I don't Kathryn will. I hate to spank them, but they obey with alacrity as a result.

Any bad manners at the dinner table or failure to eat properly and they are sent out to finish the meal in the kitchen.

You could say with certainty, however, that these children are less reverent where old Dad's concerned than my first family was. I only had to lift an eyebrow to restore order with the older boys. Now all I get is a momentary hush.

I might add that I'm enjoying the easy, casual relationship I have with my new family more than I did the strict obedience I got from my first four sons. Rarely did the older boys seek me out for advice, but Mary Frances and Harry can go on interminably with questions and even little Nathaniel is rapidly reaching the same point. Not so long ago, Nathaniel and I were out for a walk at dusk and he said: "Daddy, it's getting dark."

"Yes, I see," I answered.

"Who darked it?" he then asked.

That's a big question to answer and I'm afraid I didn't do too well at explaining the earth's rotation to a four-year-old child.

I've noticed my new family aren't nearly as capable of amusing themselves as my four older boys were, although Mary Frances is a possible exception. I'll be working in my office, answering letters or something and she'll make 15 or 20 entrances in different costumes. She'll come in and whirl around and bow and sing a made-up song on any subject. I like that.

We like our children to amuse themselves

I think parents should allow their children to entertain themselves. Instead, too many of them work overtime to provide something to occupy their playtime. Not us. We seldom take the children out to entertain them. Perhaps for a Disney film, but that's all, unless Kathryn's in a play—they enjoy seeing their mother act. And television is taboo in our house except on Friday and Saturday evenings, when there's no school next day. Even then, they only see the cartoons or a Disney programme, though Mary Frances and Harry do get a kick out of seeing me once in a while on TV. They speak about being related to *Bing Crosby* but the older boys, I remember, shrank from publicity. I don't think the other children in their schools even knew that they were the sons of an actor. After a weekend out, I used to take the boys back to school in Santa Clara and they would always make me stop the car a distance away and let them walk the rest, so that the boys around the school yard wouldn't see me or the car. I hear a lot more about being *Bing Crosby* from this new family than I ever did from my older boys. Mary Frances and Harry will even say to me: "You're a star," occasionally. Harry has quite a sense of humour about it. He knows I don't like stopping to sign autographs when I'm in a hurry, so, just to tease me, he'll walk down the street at my side and suddenly shout: "Here comes Bing Crosby! Everybody come for an autograph!" Then I'll give him a a good swift kick in the pants and he thinks that's tremendously funny. If my older boys had done that I'd have been really angry. Sometimes I think I might have driven those four boys too hard, but it seemed a good idea at the time. I still think it's better to err on the side of discipline than laxity with children. Discipline gives children a sense of security.

I had a Nevada ranch for myself and the boys when they were young. They went up there every summer and spent three months with the men, working for the same salary. They dug ditches, mended fences, pitched hay. It wasn't a lark.

I wanted my boys to know life can be tough

My purpose was to let them learn through hard work how tough life can be for a man who earns a living with his hands. But maybe I was too hard.

It discouraged any of them from becoming ranchers, which was a big disappointment to me. Now I have another, smaller ranch up near the Oregon border in California. We raise a few cattle and keep horses. I'll give Harry and Nathaniel a try at working there and see how they take to it.

They seem to like it now, but it's too early to tell yet. I think we'll spare Mary Frances the ranch work although she does love those horses. I don't need to think up things for Harry to do. He likes to help everybody. Nathaniel's different. If there's something we think he ought to be doing, he'll choose something else. But we face all our problems together.

It worked that way with my older boys, too. I tried to give them the idea of responsibility early in life. They learned values on the ranch. After about 21 their senses of values changed a bit and we had a bad time for a while. Now they're living simply again. Looking back, I wish I'd started training my older boys earlier for show business. Gary's the only one who's active in show business now. Maybe it's just as well.

There'll be no thought of show business with my new family for many years, even though they seem to share the same interest in it as my older

boys did. But the youngsters have an ear for music—all of them. And if any of them continues to show talent and determination, I think we'll give them some help and training. Essentially, though, the best thing anyone can do for small children is set an example. And the best thing a father can do for his children is be with them.

Down on the beach

We spend about three months a year —from March to June—near La Paz, down in Baja, California. It's a remote little colony with nice Mexican people, isolated, with no telephones, no radio, no television. I'm with the children all the time there, except when they're at school. We have a great time on the beach gathering shells and fishing. Mary Frances is a keen collector of sea life. Interesting little girl, Mary Frances.

I somethimes wonder what my father would have thought of these grandchildren. He and my mother were rather strict, but we adored them. There were seven of us. We came out of a Catholic home and my father didn't make a great deal of money. My mother raised us on his small salary and we all got through college somehow. We were a religious family and I think every child should have some religious faith. We weren't given pocket money or luxuries. Anything we wanted we had to buy from part-time and holiday jobs.

My father, a book-keeper, always made sure we had music in our home.

Years later, when I had some success in Hollywood, he almost burst with pride. When he was in his sixties, he helped me manage my business affairs and always carried newspaper cuttings about me. I think I know how he felt.

If one of my children ever does anything outstanding I think it will give me more satisfaction than anything I've ever accomplished.

Even if it doesn't happen, I'll still feel that raising my two families has been the most important and rewarding part of my life ▶ THE END

The Herald, Sat., July 14, 1984

He's just a song and dance man

IT annoyed Bing Crosby to think he'd had the hit "White Christmas" yet it was Fred Astaire, who was getting all the adulation.

Both had starred in the film "Holiday Inn" (Fred's first film where he didn't get the girl).

After the film's release and the success of "White Christmas", which went on to sell 95 million copies, the two friends were entertaining the troops in France during the war.

For days the Groaner bemoaned the fact that he was virtually unrecognised by the girls in the small French town where they awaited their next orders. On the other hand there were swarms of nubile ladies around Fred.

The incident showed that Fred was a stayer. His dancing feet have moved with all the fads and changes that come with show business. Now in his mid-eighties Fred's still around and has been dubbed "entertainer of the century".

His long career that began as a child vaudevillian with his sister Adele is followed in Michael Freedland's biography "Fred Astaire".

Fred's first professional performance with his sister was at the age of five. A critic in 1905 wrote that the two little ones "give an electrical dancing novelty in vaudeville". It was the first of thousands of good reviews.

Fred's career looked as though it would end when sister Adele, whom he always considered the star, decided to retire in 1932 and marry Lord Charles Cavendish.

The critics felt no other partner would be able to create that magic with Fred. Who could foresee the partnership 12 months later with redhead Ginger Rogers in the film "Flying Down to Rio".

"The Carioca" dance sequence took 100 hours to rehearse and lasted four minutes on screen.

Fred was always the perfectionist and always doubted his ability.

Despite the great partnering of Ginger and Fred, the duo was not as perfect as it seemed. Ginger wanted a solo career and Fred hated being called Mr Ginger Rogers.

But success could not be ignored.

More films were made, "Top Hat" becoming a classic. The strain of producing new steps became heavier and heavier with roller skates being used in a novel routine for "Shall we Dance" in 1937.

In 1939 the strain proved too much and the popular pair parted for a decade. Fred's new partners included the young Margarita Cansino who became Rita Hayworth, Paulette Goddard, Joan Leslie and Judy Garland in the smash hit "Easter Parade" in 1948.

Judy and Fred were teamed together again for "The Barkleys of Broadway", but Judy's ill health forced the studio to replace her with — Ginger Rogers.

The public was delighted and everyone forgot the rumors that Fred and Ginger didn't really get on.

In 1949, the pair made their 10th and last picture together. Fred was 49 but it was to be another 20 years before he finally hung up his dancing shoes after "Finian's Rainbow" coupled with Petula Clark. He was also enjoying a successful career in straight movies such as "On the Beach", "The Notorious Diplomat" and as recently as 1981 "Ghost Story".

Throughout his career Fred has always been asked to name his favorite partner. The answer was given as "Bing".

As for his partner in life, for 20 years he and his wife Phyllis led a happy life away from first nights and parties. Sadly Phyllis died of a brain tumor in 1954, aged 46.

Fred remained faithful to her memory for 25 years and then married a young jockey, half his age, called Robyn Smith. His family was upset and his sister Adele furious. After eight decades together, beginning as the greatest double act in the theatre, the sister and brother's relationship cracked. Adele was never reconciled because she died six months after the marriage, aged 84.

As for Fred, he's still married shares a love of the turf with his wife and keeps a string of racehorses in Australia.

Yes, he's a stayer, but he's always known his limitations. "I guess the one thing that worries me is knowing when to stop," he says. "I don't give a hoot about clinging to a career. I don't want to become the oldest living dancer in captivity."

FRED ASTAIRE, *by Michael Freedland, (W.H. Allen, $26.95).*

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COLLECTOR'S
CORNER
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Bing Crosby Phonocard

Now here's a real collector's item. Amongst Bing's financial interests was 'Bing Crosby Phonocards Inc' which issued a variety of 'throw away' discs on either cardboard or plastic. Some feature Bing; others like the one shown at left (actual size) do not. Issued in the 1950's, this is a rare item!

Around the World

In 1956, Bing, like so many artists, recorded the hit song from the movie "Around the World in 80 Days".
This is the paper cover from one of the many 45 rpm issues of this pleasant song.

The Boy Friends

This is a real mixed bag from the late 1950's and it features a variety of tracks from the four artists named. Bing is represented on two tracks. "My Kinda Love" with the Dorsey Brother's Band from 1929 (!) and "Here Is My Heart", also with the Dorseys, from 1933. This latter track made the LP particularly sought after by collectors as it represented the first commercial issue of this song ever! (Only test pressings were available to the lucky few.) Of course, in recent years, the track surfaced again on one of the three excellent Columbia LP issues of Bing's early 30's material which appeared a few years ago.

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COLLECTOR'S
CORNER

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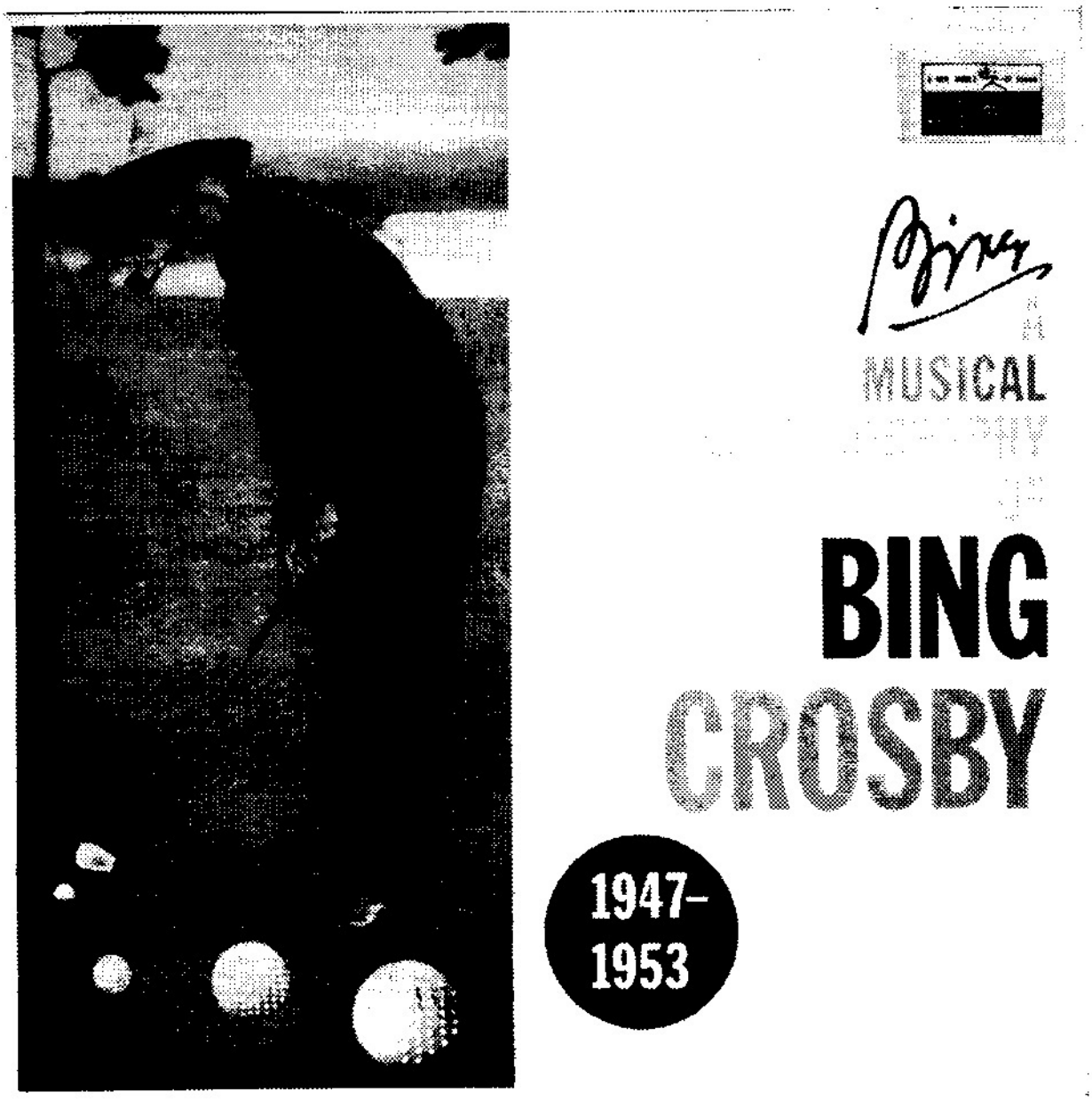
Return to Paradise Islands

Recorded in two sessions in August and December of 1963, this album represented Bing's last Hawaiian recordings. Not the best of Bing's Reprise recordings, it didn't sell too well and is amongst the hardest of his 'later' LP's to find today.



A Musical Autobiography

How many people remember that Bing's five LP Musical Autobiography set was also issued as five separate 12" discs. This is the cover of the original Australian issue of Volume 5. The set was also issued in the USA back in 1954 as a boxed set of EP's! Quite a big box it was too. We'll feature that also on these pages in a later issue of the magazine.

WANTED : U.K. REP.

The Victorian Bing Crosby Society requires a U.K. representative. Someone who could open a bank account in England and to whom members could send their renewals without the bother of having to arrange bank drafts, IMO's etc. We see this person also as being a contact point for the Society for membership enquiries, etc.

Our US rep Richard Pearson also distributes the newsletter to American members, although at this stage, we have no plans for a similiar service for the U.K.

If you are interested in volunteering for such a position, please drop me a line at the Club address: P.O. Box 422, South Melbourne, Victoria, Australia 3205. Bob Machliss.

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(Faces at the 1984 Club BBQ last April. From left to right: Bob Machliss, Bob Paull, Les Saynor, Keith Dorman. What a lineup!)

THE OREGONIAN, MONDAY, MAY 21, 1984

Book provides look at legendary Crosby

By JOHN WENDEBORN
of The Oregonian staff

Seven years after his death in Spain, Bing Crosby is being regaled in a book by a Canadian writer that continues the Crosby legend.

Before the crooner died, he was involved in a lengthy radio series called "The Crosby Years," the brainchild of Gord Atkinson. The long relationship Atkinson had with Crosby resulted in reams of notes. That material has been used for "Bing, A Voice For All Seasons," written by Sheldon O'Connell in collaboration with Atkinson. Both men are Canadian broadcasters and writers.

There have been some less than favorable comments made about Crosby in other books since his death, but you find nothing about any of that in this 250-page paperback book. The book is readable, if you can disregard the errors in punctuation and grammar. It's definitely "gee whiz" throughout as it covers the 50-year career of one of America's best-known singers and entertainers.

Anecdotes are told by many of those close to Crosby, as well as by Crosby, in quotes attributed to the singer and noted by Atkinson. His movies and his costars, other singers and musicians all come in for some mention. And a lot of photographs help fill the space.

The book is dedicated to Ken Twiss, president of the Bing Crosby Historical Society in Tacoma, Wash., Crosby's birthplace. It also includes a complete encyclopedia of Crosby's commercial recordings from 1927-77, which is a thorough guide to the man's work. The book is available from the society, 443 Perkins Bldg., 1103 A St., Tacoma, Wash., 98402.

We still haven't sighted "Bing - A Man For All Seasons" here yet, but maybe this will wet your appetite for its arrival.)

OVERSEAS MEMBERS PLEASE READ

When renewing your membership direct with Australia, please DO NOT SEND CHEQUES (CHECKS FOR US MEMBERS!) DRAWN ON YOUR PERSONAL ACCOUNT. We cannot cash these here without great delay and added expense of up to $5. Cash is not really a good idea either. Bank drafts are preferred although I.M.O.'s are acceptable.

GREAT NEW COVERS FOR YOUR AUDIO CASSETTES

Our enterprising friend in the U.K., Frank Murphy, has come up with a very exciting idea for dressing up your Crosby cassettes. Blue and gold inner linings featuring an attractive colour photograph on the front. I believe that a series of shots is available. Best write to Frank for details: The Bing Crosby Colour Photoclub, 32 Ferndale Avenue, Tyne and Wear, NE28 7NE.

BING - BUT NOT THE REAL THING!

Richard Pearson sent us this photo recently of this wax figure of Bing from The International Hall of Fame at Orlando, Florida. As Richard writes, it does look pretty lifelike.

Trading Post

NORM BURMEISTER, 3/59 IONA ST, BLACKROCK 3193, VICTORIA
has the following super 8 sound movies for sale. Prices are very reasonable. Ring Norm if you like. (03) 589 4928.

400' colour - The Jolson Story (extracts) Au$20.00
400' colour - Jolson Sings Again (extracts) Au$20.00
200' colour - The Music of Benny Goodman Au$10.00 (both from the
200' colour - Benny Goodman in Concert Au$10.00 Benny Goodman Story
200' B & W - Ted Heath & His Music Au$10.00.

RUSSELL RULLMAN, 159 SOUTH MANSFIELD AVE, L.A. CALIFORNIA 90036
wants

KRAFT MUSIC HALL songs and programmes. Russ is happy to either pay cash or swap tapes, and will gladly send you his list of wants. He's also interested in Bing/Buddy Cole.

REG ANDREWS, B16, HUNTER CONNECTION, 7 - 13 HUNTER ST, SYDNEY 2000
still has a few dozen 78's a number of LP's from his mammoth auction list which appeared in the last edition of The Crosby Voice. He writes that the price for 78's is now down to $1 each for sales of ten or more, and LP's only $5 each for purchases of four or more.

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LIKE TO ORDER YOUR OVERSEAS LP ISSUES DIRECT?

Richard Pearson has supplied the names of three mail order companies whom he recommends. All accept VISA cards which is very handy for Australians as we now have those cards here too.

MAIL DISC, 280 Central Park Road, London E6 3AD, England.
RECORD CENTRE, 44-46 Loveday St, Birmingham B4 6NP, England.
WORLD RECORDS, PO Box 2613, San Rafael, Cal. 94912, USA.

Richard suggests that you write to the last two named for catalogues before ordering.

"BING - A VOICE FOR ALL SEASONS" - WHERE TO WRITE
Send payment of US$20.00 to: Kerryman Publications, Tralee, Co Kerry, Ireland. Yes, they take Visa Card too.

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LETTERS

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From Girvan Paterson, Oakleigh.

I was most interested to read Ken Henderson's reply to my previous query regarding 'King of Jazz'. I am most interested in film preservation, with particular interest of course in the films of BING. It's a shock to most people who love movies to hear that half of the films produced since 1915 have already been lost forever, but it's a fact. Admittedly, most of these would be silent films and 'B' films, but nevertheless, many 'talkies' are among them.

I feel that it's up to us fans to do whatever we can to ensure that all the films of Bing are being preserved on 35mm safety film negatives and prints by the companies that own them. Otherwise several of Bing's films could finish up 'lost' forever.

Three times over the past 18 months I have written to MCA/Universal asking if they have 35mm negatives and prints of Bing's early films in their archives, I have sent a complete list of all the features Bing made for Paramount and Universal during the 1930's, and yes, I have included reply-paid coupons, but have never received a reply!

By contrast, I have written to the American Film Institute asking the same questions, and received a prompt reply. The AFI archives hold very little of Bing's output. They have 'Going Hollywood', 'Pennies From Heaven' and some material from 'King of Jazz'. They also suggested that I write to UCLA Film Archives, which I did, also receiving a prompt and detailed reply. UCLA have 35mm nitrate prints of 14 of Bing's 1930's features plus 2 of the Mack Sennett shorts (nitrate film of course deteriorates in time and eventually self-destructs). UCLA do have a 35mm safety print of Mississippi.

P.S. RCA in the US have scrapped the CED video discs, after three years, and with a catalogue that grew to over 1200 disc titles. One of the last released was 'The Country Girl'. This would appear to leave the entire field open to Laser Disc.

From Col. Robert Stratiff, Virginia

I was born and raised in Pittsburgh and spent much of my youth both playing baseball and watching the Pirates play. This was in the mid-1940's and I was lucky enough to see quite a lot of Bing at the games. On one occasion I was fortunate enough to exchange a few words with him

at the ballpark. I knew he liked to leave early to avoid the crowd, so I posted myself on the ramp below the owners box and then fell in beside him as he started down the ramp. As it happened, I had just seen the recently released "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" and was telling him how much I enjoyed the picture. He started to reply with "Oh, did you see that? Glad you enjoyed it", when a stream of young and not-so-young ladies decended on him as we reached the ramp below. The last I saw of Bing he was taking off at full tilt with his adoring fans in full pursuit!

From Cliff Brisbois, Sherman Oaks
Two weeks ago, our apartment was burglarized. Fortunately, no Bing Crosby LP's were taken, but unfortunately, most of my collection of Bing audio cassettes were. Can any of your members help me replace them? (CAN YOU HELP CLIFF? His full address is 4567 Willis Ave, Apt 306, Sherman Oaks, California 91043, USA. Cliff requires dozens of Bing's commercial cassettes! Please write.)

From Ken Twiss, The Bing Crosby Historical Society, Tacoma.
The planning and execution of our 1984 Tribute is now in the past. It was quite a success, but the aftermath is almost as hard to endure as the Tribute itself. So many letters to write. I do try to thank everyone who contributed. And there are many.

One of our capable volunteers has helped BCHS a great deal. He contacted a radio station in Seattle, and through Don Camp's efforts, they had a "Bing Crosby Week" just before our Tribute. Don enjoyed your article about Bing and golf, and used golf as the basis for some of the quiz questions. Radio KIXI gave modest prizes for the correct answers. One question asked "How many holes-in-one did Bing record?" Listeners had a tough time with that one. The answer was thirteen!

From Kevin Sheather, Lalor
I was particularly interested in the references in your last issue to Australia's Bing and Swing Club as I instigated the Victorian Branch in 1947 and was President during its four year run in this state. We used to conduct our meetings in various localities including St Silas Church Hall in Albert Park. (We're you a member if the Bing and Swing Club at this time? Why not drop us a line and tell us about it. For that matter, if you were a member of any Crosby Club in the old days, give us the details. BM)

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FROM OUT OF THE PAST

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THE KMH FIGHT SONG - "HAIL KMH" by Carroll Carroll & John Scott Trotter

Hail KMH!
Hail, rain and snow!
Onward to victory
Forward we will go!
Stamping out our adversary
Like a dauntless dromedary
Tramples on his foe...
Forever...
Hail, KMH!
Our motto cry!
"Be brave and love each other
Wear the old school tie!"
Like an eagle loose aloft
Wave the pomegranite and puce aloft...
Rah, rah, rah, rah, rah, rah, rahhhh...
With a hey nonny-nonny and a hot-cha-cha
Hail...(Ring chimes)

(Like to hear "Hail KMH" in all its original glory as sung by Bing? The borrow cassette KHB 11 from the Club library. The song may be found at the very end of side 1. BM.)

CROONER WORRIES (From the Hollywood Reporter, Dec 1935)
Necessity for Bing Crosby to be in Hollywood every Thursday for broadcasts on the Kraft Program is complicating Paramount's attempts to find a suitable location for "Rhythm on the Range". Director Norman Taurog spent several days looking for spots near the Grand Canyon, but after checking up on train schedules it was found Crosby couldn't get back in town without too much waste of time, for Crosby won't fly.

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF BING CROSBY (From "Motion Picture", May 1938)
Close by the Trocadero and the Cafe Lamaze, in the niterie and de luxe 10% row of Hollywood, rises the new Bing Crosby Building. As you enter through its portals, you notice the same tense activity as prevails in the business offices of metropolitan banks. A chic, lustrous gal operates the switchboard. Chic lustrous stenographers

pound away on their typewriters in a roar of staccato rhythm. White modernistic doors are marked "Private". Producers, song writers, authors, agents, salesmen and hopefuls of all sorts go in and out, not to mention fans visiting Hollywood from all over the country and eager for a glimpse of the crooning Dr Bing, who however, is never there.

We waited for Larry Crosby in the reception room of the adjoining annex. He is, among other things, "Public relations council" of Bing Crosby Inc., Ltd., movieland's most intriguing business enterprise. Larry took us to the NBC atudio, where Bing was rehearsing his weekly radio series, so we could talk directly to him.

We found the eminent Dr. Crosby reading his script, pipe in mouth, standing before a microphone. A Bolshevik, no doubt, would have taken him for 'tovarich'. His blue work-shirt was open at the collar and hung outside his trousers in the Russian fashion, and there was a battered cap on his head. He is tanned, solidly built. Whe he finished his reading and joined us he relighted his pipe by striking a match against a fingernail, a trick that distinguishes the sophisticated smoker.

We asked him how he practices that million dollar voice of his? "I never practice," he said. "I have never taken any voice lessons. As a matter of fact, I can't read music. This is the only show of its kind that goes on air without a dress rehersal. Most programs are rehearsed two days to a week. We do ours in half a day. I don't believe in doing all your fighting in a training camp." And indeed, the secret of Bing's success, both as a crooner and M.C. lies in the natural spontaneous manner of his delivery.

His singing those deep, haunting tones and boo-boo-boos that pluck at the heart-strings is an unstudied art. We observed him from 2 pm to 8 pm and both during the rehersal and actual broadcast he was the same unpretentious, nonchalant fellow, except that during the broadcast he took off his cap in deference to the audience, but his blue shirt was still hanging outside his trousers and his pipe enjoyed temporary leisure in the pocket of his shirt.

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And that's where we'll end this edition of The Crosby Voice. Hope you enjoyed it. Vern's next KMH article appears in our final issue for the year. Until then...

BACK PAGE SPECIAL

This cartoon tribute to Bing appeared in a well-known London newspaper around the time of his 1976 Palladium Concerts.

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